

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CANBER 02186 230713Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 IO-13 NEA-10 NSAE-00
USIA-06 OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01
AGRE-00 OMB-01 SS-15 NSC-05 STR-07 PA-01 L-03
H-01 /124 W

-----098347 231557Z /72

R 230559Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2781
INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PERTH
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 2186

USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, EGEN, ELAB, AS
SUBJECT: FEBRUARY UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS -- NO JOY IN MUDVILLE

REF: CANBERRA 1051

1. SUMMARY: WHILE DUAL UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS RELEASED
MARCH 17 CREATED SOME CONFUSION, THEIR BASIC MESSAGE IS THAT
RATHER THAN SHOWING SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT AS PREVIOUSLY
PREDICTED BY FRASER GOVERNMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION HAS
CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE. NEW ABS SERIES SHOWS 7.3 PERCENT
OF FULL-TIME LABOR FORCE UNEMPLOYED, WHILE OLD CES SERIES
SHOWS SLIGHT DROP IN UNEMPLOYED FROM 7.2 PERCENT IN JANUARY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CANBER 02186 230713Z

TO 6.9 PERCENT IN FEBRUARY. END SUMMARY.

2. ISSUANCE OF USUAL COMMONWEALTH EMPLOYMENT SERCIE (CES)
STATISTICS DELAYED A WEEK IN ORDER TO COINCIDE WITH NEW
AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (ABS) MONTHLY SERIES (ABS
SERIES HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN AVAILABLE ON QUARTERLY BASIS
ONLY). CES SERIES BASED ON THOSE REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED

WITH CES ON LAST DAY OF MONTH AND INCLUDES THOSE WHO HAVE FOUND JOBS, BUT WHO HAVE NOT BOTHERED INFORM CES. IT DOES NOT RPT NOT OF COURSE INCLUDE THOSE WHO ARE OUT OF WORK, BUT WHO HAVE NOT BOTHERED TO REGISTER WITH CES. ABS SERIES BASED ON SURVEY TAKEN DURING FIRST TWO WEEKS IN FEBRUARY (STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATE FOR TOTAL UNEMPLOYED LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME JOB IS 0.1).

3. ALTHOUGH CES ERIES WILL CONTINUE TO BE ISSUED, IT GENERALLY REGARDED THAT ABS ERIES IS MORE RELIABLE, MORE CLOSELY CONFORMS TO INTERNATIONAL MEASUREMENT STANDARDS AND THAT IT WILL HENCEFORTH BE TREATED AS "OFFICIAL" UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS. TO AVOID CONFUSION, IN FUTURE EMBASSY WILL BASE ITS REPORTS ON ABS SERIES.

4. ACCORDING TO CES FIGURES, UNEMPLOYMENT FELL BY 14,044 FROM 445,300 TO 431,256 IN FEBRUARY, REPRESENTING 6.95 PERCENT OF WORK FORCE OF 6.2 MILLION, COMPARED TO 7.2 PERCENT IN JANUARY. CES FIGURES SHOW THAT UNFILLED VACANCIES FELL FROM 24,868 IN JANUARY TO 22,257 IN FEBRUARY AND THAT AS RESULT 19.4 PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR EVERY JOB, COMPARED WITH 17.9 IN JANUARY.

5. ABS FIGURES MAKE AVAILABLE FOR FIRST TIME A BREAKDOWN OF UNEMPLOYED BY AGE GROUP AND SEX AND BY THOSE LOOKING FOR FULL OR PART-TIME WORK AS FOLLOWS (FIGURES FOR NOVEMBER 77 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CANBER 02186 230713Z

QUARTERLY SURVEY IN PARENTHESES); PERSONS LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK AGED 15-19 YEARS, 21.6 PERCENT (17.4 PERCENT); AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, 5.2 PERCENT (3.8 PERCENT); TOTAL, 7.3 PERCENT (5.2 PERCENT). PERSONS LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK, 8.5 PERCENT (6.5 PERCENT); OVERALL TOTAL, 7.4 PERCENT (5.5 PERCENT). MALES LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK; AGED 15-19 YEARS, 20.0 PERCENT (15.7 PERCENT); AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, 4.6 PERCENT (3.3 PERCENT); TOTAL, 6.0 PERCENT (4.3 PERCENT). MALES LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK, 9.4 PERCENT (7.4 PERCENT); OVERALL TOTAL 6.2 PERCENT (4.5 PERCENT). FEMALES LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK; AGED 15-19 YEARS, 23.6 PERCENT (19.2 PERCENT); AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, 7.1 PERCENT (4.9 PERCENT); TOTAL, 10.4 PERCENT (7.5 PERCENT) FEMALES LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK 8.2 PERCENT (6.5 PERCENT); OVERALL TOTAL, 9.7 PERCENT (7.1 PERCENT). IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT FEBRUARY TRADITIONALLY A MONTH IN WHICH NEW EMPLOYMENT OCCURS ON ACCELERATING BASIS THROUGHOUT MONTH AND FACT THAT SURVEY TAKEN DURING FIRST TWO WEEKS MAY OVERSTATE MONTHLY TOTALS. IT SHOULD ALSO BE POINTED OUT THAT NOVEMBER SURVEY TAKEN THROUGHOUT MONTH AND THAT IT TAKEN BEFORE TRADITIONAL DECEMBER INFLUX OF SCHOOL-LEAVERS.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ACTING MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, VINER, TRIED TO MAKE BRAVE FRONT TO FEBRUARY UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION BY POINTING TO IMPROVEMENT IN CES FIGURES, HE ADMITTED THAT THE DROP NOT AS GOOD AS GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE LIKED. GOVERNMENT CLEARLY EMBARRASSED BY RELEASE OF HIGH ABS UNEMPLOYMENT SERIES, AS FOR SOME TIME IT HAD BEEN GRUPETING THE ADVENT OF NEW SERIS AND STATING THAT IT MORE ACCURATE IN THAT CES SERIES TENDED TO OVERSTATE THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED FACT THAT ABS FIGURE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN CES FIGURE WAS CLEARLY AN EMBARRASSMENT. NEVERTHELESS, VINER ADMITTED THAT ABS SERIES BASED STANDARDS SET DOWN INTERNATIONALLY AND ARE BEST BASIS FOR ASSESSING UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS IN AUSTRALIA. OPPOSITION REACTION WAS AS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED WITH SPOKESMAN ON ECONOMIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CANBER 02186 230713Z

AFFAIRS, RALPH WILLIS, CALLING ABS SERIES A "SHATTERING EXPOSE OF THIS GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM TO COMPETENT ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT." ALSTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNEMPLOYMENT DATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CANBER02186
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780128-0573
Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA USOECD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780334/aaaabcao.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ca3d1fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CANBERRA 1051
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3229757
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FEBRUARY UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS -- NO JOY IN MUDVILLE
TAGS: ECON, EGEN, ELAB, AS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ca3d1fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014